

Assistance to farmers hit by natural calamities

253. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are numerous instances of farmers committing suicide who are under heavy debt in areas affected by natural calamities;

(b) if so, the details thereof during the last three years, State-wise and year-wise;

(c) whether Government have extended any relief to the families of the deceased farmers;

(d) if so, the details thereof, State-wise during the last three years;

(e) whether there is demand for writing off of the loans obtained by the farmers from banks;

(f) if so, the details thereof;

(g) whether Government have expressed its inability to accept the demand; and

(h) if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) Indebtedness and drought conditions are among the major causes attributed by the State Governments for farmers committing suicide. The details of suicide by farmers because of agricultural reasons as reported by the State Governments for the last three years are given in the Statement.

[Refer to the Statement appendix to the answer to Starred Question 51 (a) and (b)].

(c) and (d) The State Governments of Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Karnataka are giving an *ex-gratia* amount of Rs. one lakh and the State Government of Kerala Rs. 50,000 to the family of the deceased farmer in all eligible cases.

Besides, the Prime Minister during his visit to the State of Andhra Pradesh in 2004 had announced an amount of Rs. 50,000/- each for 150 affected families in the State as a one-time measure from the Prime Minister's Relief Fund.

(e) to (h) There has been demand from several quarters for writing off the agriculture loans.

The Government of India has approved a rehabilitation package for the farmers in 31 suicide prone districts of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala and Maharashtra involving total amount of Rs. 16978.69 crore which, *inter alia*, includes Rs. 2718.25 crore for waiver of interest on overdue agricultural loans. The State-wise details of interest waiver are as under:

{Rs. in crore}

Sl.No.	State	Amount
1.	Andhra Pradesh	1436.44
2.	Karnataka	209.81
3.	Kerala	3760.00
4.	Maharashtra	712.00
TOTAL:		2718.25

Subsidies for wheat output

254. SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA.
SHRIMATI SHOBHANABHARTIA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether forced to import wheat for the first time in 6 years, Government have unveiled plan to boost wheat output by about 7 million tonnes in the coming season through a plan *i.e.* entirely subsidy-driven costing Government Rs. 2482 crores over three years in 138 identified districts;

(b) if so, whether this money would be used for seed replacement, demonstration of improved technology, micro-nutrients and use of advanced sowing technique;

(c) if so, to what extent these methods have been introduced; and

(d) to what extent it has been helpful in achieving the higher production of wheat?